



PRESS RELEASE

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ROUND ROCK KILLER SENTENCED TO SEVEN CONSECUTIVE LIFE SENTENCES FOR CAR JACK MURDERS

PHOENIX, ARIZONA –The United States Attorneys Office for the District of Arizona, announced that on August 25, 2003, Gregory Nakai, 5/31/80, of Round Rock, Arizona, was sentenced to 7 consecutive life sentences, by United States District Judge Frederick J. Martone, in Phoenix, Arizona.

On December 19, 2002, the defendant along with Johnnie Orsinger had been convicted of 2 counts of premeditated first degree murder, 2 counts of first degree felony (kidnap)murder, one count of first degree felony (robbery) murder all in violation of Title 18 United States Code, Section 1111, car jacking resulting in death in violation of Title 18 United States Code, Section 2119, one count of robbery in violation of Title 18 United States Code, Section 2111, kidnap in violation of Title 18 United States Code, Section 1201 and 9 counts of using a firearm during crimes of violence in violation of Title 18 United States Code, Section 924(c).

The evidence at trial showed that Gregory Nakai, Johnnie Orsinger, and others decided to “jack” a 1997 Chevy Blazer owned by Jasbert Sam while they were at Round Rock Lake, Arizona on the Navajo

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Indian Reservation. The assaulted the passenger, David Kee Begay and pulled Sam from his vehicle. The used Sam's electrical cords, he was an electrician for the Navajo Housing Authority, to tie both men. The victims were loaded into the rear of the Blazer and it was driven away from the Lake to an area north of Tsaile. During the drive, Orsinger "pistol-whipped" the driver telling him not to look at Orsinger. They reached the end of a dirt road at the edge of a canyon. Orsinger removed Begay from the Blazer while Nakai pulled out Sam. As they lay on the ground, still restrained by the electrical cord, Johnnie Orsinger fired one shot into the temple area of Begay's head. Gregory Nakai took the gun, a 9 mm semiautomatic pistol, and fired 5 rounds into the chest and head area of Jasbert Sam. They, with help of the others who showed up after the shooting, covered the bodies with brush and set them afire. The bodies were cremated and left. The group drove the Blazer away and eventually hid it in the trees back at the Round Rock Lake. However, the police found it the next day. The case remained unsolved until the FBI received a phone call in early November of 2001 from a source who provided information about the identities of the assailants. After tribal arrests, Gregory Nakai admitted that he shot Jasbert Sam and Orsinger confessed that he shot David Begay. It was only then that the remains of the victims were located.

Gregory Nakai was sentenced to life without parole on Counts 1 and 7 for premeditated murder of Begay and Sam, life without parole for Counts 3 and 15 Felony Murder during a kidnaping of Begay and Sam, life without parole for Counts 5 and 17 for death resulting during a kidnaping of Begay and Sam; life without parole for Count 11 Felony Murder - Robbery of Sam; life without parole for Count 13, robbery of Sam and life without parole for Count 9, Car Jack of Sam. All of these sentences to run concurrently.

Additionally, Nakai received 10 years for Count 2, use of a firearm during a crime of violence, the sentence to run consecutively to the murder counts, 25 years for Count 4 use of a firearm during a crime of violence, the sentence to run consecutively to Count 2, 25 years for Count 6 use of a firearm during a crime of violence, the sentence to run consecutively to Count 4; life without parole for Count 8 use of a

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firearm during a crime of violence, the sentence to run consecutively to Count 6; life without parole for Count 10 use of a firearm during a crime of violence, the sentence to run consecutively to Count 8; life without parole for Count 12 use of a firearm during a crime of violence, the sentence to run consecutively to Count 10; life without parole for Count 14 use of a firearm during a crime of violence, the sentence to run consecutively to Count 12; life without parole for Count 16 use of a firearm during a crime of violence, the sentence to run consecutively to Count 14; life without parole for Count 18 use of a firearm during a crime of violence, the sentence to run consecutively to Count 16.

Dennie Leal was sentenced to 30 years in prison for his more limited role in the offenses as well as an unrelated shooting that occurred several weeks later.

The murder investigation was led by Special Agents Brad Purscell and Ray Duncan of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. They were assisted by Dan Smith, Ernie Yazzie, Bennie Jim, Michael Henderson, Esther Charley, Louis St. Germaine of the Navajo Department of Public Safety, Department of Criminal Investigations.

The prosecution was handled by Kurt M. Altman and Vincent Q. Kirby, Assistant United States Attorneys, District of Arizona, Phoenix, Arizona.

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